

What Marxsen says about the way in which the law or a merely spiritual Christ (in the case of the examples he takes from Paul) or the church or the Bible can all take the place of Jesus—namely, because they cease to be used as alternative and interchangeable ways of enciphering Jesus as the one and only point of orientation for Christians—can obviously be applied not only to the New Testament (to which Marxsen himself, of course, applies it), but also to the kerygma, indeed, to the Jesus-kerygma as well as the Christ-kerygma.

The kerygma, also, can take the place of Jesus insofar as its contents are objectified, or not treated as existential assertions, but as truths of faith that have to be accepted if there is to be Christian faith in Jesus. What has to be accepted if there is to be Christian faith in Jesus is not at all certain *truths* of faith—not even those formulated in the immediate witness of the apostles—but the one *truth* of faith of which all so-called truths of faith, being precisely truths *of faith*, are but alternative and functionally interchangeable encipherings.

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